



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Colby Aquatic Park opens for business

Two girls (above) skidded out of the slide Thursday at the Colby Aquatic Park, creating a big splash. Three other swimmers (right) jumped into the lazy river and water trickled down onto swimmers at the park, which opened on May 26. The pool was shut down for two days after a dust storm hit Colby that night, but it reopened Tuesday after the area was cleaned up.

KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press



Security a concern at law center

By Christina Beringer
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Thomas County Sheriff Rodney Taylor briefed commissioners Thursday on problems with the building, inmates and employees at the Law Enforcement Center and made some staff recommendations for the commissioners to consider.

A major issue, which commissioners had briefly heard about from Emergency Management Director Susan McMahan earlier in the morning, is security on the third floor of the court house.

"We had one inmate attempt to escape when leaving the court house after attending court yesterday," Taylor said. "He was caught across the street by Colby Canvas. Handcuffs and a belly chain assisted in this capture, but he should have also been ankle restrained."

"He still made it down a flight of stairs and out the front door. We were also lucky to have fleet-

footed Jim Cousins escorting him, who caught him by Colby Canvas."

Taylor said this same prisoner has been making trouble since his first escape attempt six weeks ago.

"He flooded the entire jail area twice," the sheriff said, "but thankfully, he's no longer with us. There was a warrant out for him from Boulder, Colo."

Additional jail issues include a lack of adequate ventilation fans to move air in or out in the cells, hallways and booking area.

"The smell sometimes is almost unbearable, especially in the winter when the furnace is running," Taylor said. "It's mostly caused from human body smell, use of the restrooms by inmates and just the lack of fresh air circulation in general."

He said the humidity from inmates taking hot showers adds to the stench.

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World stocks extend fall on U.S. jobs report

By Greg Keller
AP Business Writer

PARIS — World markets dropped today, extending heavy losses last week, as another setback for the U.S. economic recovery intensified fears that a global recession was in the making.

The financial crisis in Europe continued unabated, with uncertainty hanging over Spain's banking sector and Cyprus looking increasingly likely to need a European Union bailout.

Investors were spooked by a U.S. report showing a sharp slowdown in the number of jobs created last month, adding to weak data from other major economies like Europe and Asia.

Unemployment in the 17 countries that use the euro currency stayed at a record-high 11 percent in April. And there were signs that growth in China, which helped sustain the global economy through the 2008-2009 recession, is slowing significantly. China's

manufacturing weakened in May, according to surveys released Friday.

"US jobs numbers were not the only weak reading as manufacturing output data in China and the US were also lower, and euro area unemployment reached a record level," Stan Shamu of IG Markets in Melbourne, said in an email.

Germany's DAX lost 0.9 percent to 5,993 and Switzerland's SMI shed 0.6 percent to 5,741, though France's CAC-40 managed to rise 0.5 percent to 2,968.49. Markets in Britain were closed for a public holiday.

Wall Street was headed for a lower open, with Dow Jones industrial futures shedding 0.6 percent to 12,032 while S&P 500 futures lost 0.5 percent to 1,268.40.

In Spain, investors are waiting for what the government intends to do to boost the finances of some of its ailing banks. The worry is that the government is al-

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Kansas courts sees a slew of high-profile suits pour in

By John Milburn
Associated Press

TOPEKA — Several high-profile lawsuits on subjects ranging from political district boundaries to water rights and school funding have hit the Kansas courts, but policymakers say it's mostly coincidence and not a sign of larger conflict in state government.

After a two-day trial in federal court on Tuesday and Wednesday over the drawing of state political boundaries, attorneys for the state and 54 school districts will begin a three-week trial Monday in Shawnee County District Court over the funding of public schools.

"It's just a coincidence," said Senate Vice President John Vratil. "That school finance case has been pending for 18 or 24 months, and the trial has been scheduled for the last five months. It's purely coincidental and I don't think anything can be read into that."

Vratil, an attorney and Leawood Republican, said the public has a right to be concerned about the expense that's involved in the litigation, but that's the nature of a democratic form of government.

The number of high-profile court cases is not unique to Gov. Sam Brownback's tenure in office.

The state's ongoing battle over water dates to a case filed in the 1902 over Colorado rights to water from the Arkansas River. The

current litigation stems from a suit filed in 1985 when Democratic Gov. John Carlin was in office.

The school finance lawsuit also dates to the late 1980s, and Republican Gov. Bill Graves was still dealing with both issues during his eight-year term from 1995 to 2003, along with the state's involvement in the national settlement with major tobacco manufacturers. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius inherited the school finance case, as well as water litigation with Nebraska over the Republican River and a lawsuit over the funding of social services.

"What's different now is there has been more public attention on a small number of those suits," At-

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New youth pastor hired at Colby Berean Church

By Christina Beringer
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The Colby Berean Church has a new youth pastor. Ben Phillips from Haxtun, Colo., began work on May 1 and says he is looking forward to taking on youth and music duties at the church.

A 2008 graduate of Haxtun High School, Phillips has been a licensed pastor for two years and is pursuing an online degree in church ministry through Liberty University of Lynchburg, Va. He says he hopes to receive a bachelor's degree in about a year and a half and intends to earn a master's degree as well. He said his wife JaNae is active in the ministry as well.

"God has really gifted her with the ability to impact young kids," he said.

Phillips said his goal is to provide the youth of Colby with "the truth of God's word in ways that make sense and stick with them."

"The youth are a huge part of the church, but they don't always connect with the same kind of teaching as adults do," he said. "This is where I come in."

"My hope is that by the time a teen graduates from youth group, they will not only know about God, but they will desire to serve Him in whatever way He calls them to."

Phillips said that after high school, he started a youth group at the Haxtun Berean Bible Church. After a few months he moved to Chappell, Neb. There he met his wife and together, they drove kids back and forth each week for youth group

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